

Message Text

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SUBJECT: BAKER/SANDERS PERFORMANCES

1. AFTER 13-YEAR HIATUS, USIA PROGRAMMING SUCCESSFULLY RETURNED TO CONGO WITH BAKER/SANDERS PERFORMANCES. DUO WAS WELL RECEIVED BY CONCERT AUDIENCES ON SUCCESSIVE DAYS IN BRAZZAVILLE, POINTE-NOIRE AND OUESSO. THIS FIRST PROGRAM SINCE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WAS ACCOMPANIED BY FIRST RADIO, TV, AND PRESS PLACEMENTS AND FIRST DISTRIBUTION TOPIC AND LOCAL BULLETIN USING PARIS MATERIALS.

2. BRAZZAVILLE CONCERT IN MAISON COMMUNE OF POTO POTP, ONE OF CITY'S MORE CROWDED DISTRICTS, COMBINED PROMINENT INVITEES INCLUDING CULTURE MINISTER, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY RECTOR AND DIPLOMATIC CORPS, WITH CONGOLESE WORKERS. THE CROWD OF 300 VASTLY ENJOYED CONCERT AND ENTHUSIASTICALLY JOINED SINGING. PROMINENT LOCAL FEMALE SINGER JOINED DUO ON STAGE TO AUDIENCE'S DELIGHT. ALTHOUGH MAISON LESS THAN IDEAL ACCOUSTICALLY, ITS USE REFLECTED EMBASSY'S PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE APPROACH TO RELATIONS WITH CONGO AND WAS WIDELY APPRECIATED BY GOCB AUTHORITIES.

3. POINTE-NOIRE IS ECONOMIC CAPITAL, PORT, AND TOURIST HAVEN,
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WITH SOPHISTICATED POPULATION ACCUSTOMED TO HAVING EUROPEAN PERFORMERS FREQUENTLY. FIRST APPEARANCE OF AMERICAN SHOW WAS MAJOR EVENT ATTRACTING 250 CONGOLESE AND EUROPEANS TO CLUB 7 THEATER. ALTHOUGH INITIALLY RESERVED, AUDIENCE QUICKLY WARMED TO BAKER'S DYNAMISM AND ENTHUSIASTICALLY PARTICIPATED IN SINGING. BRILLIANT GUITAR WORK BY BOTH BAKER AND SANDERS SPARKED SPONTANEOUS APPLAUSE THROUGHOUT CONCERT.

4. HIGHLIGHT OF TOUR CAME IN OUESSO, A REMOTE NORTHERN REGIONAL CAPITAL, WHERE NEARLY 1,000 PEOPLE TURNED OUT FOR OUTDOOR JAM SESSION WITH LOCAL GROUP IN CITY'S CENTER. REGIONAL GOVERNOR, MILITARY COMMANDER, MAYOR AND ALL IMPORTANT LOCAL OFFICIALS ATTENDED. DESPITE ONLY 4 HOURS SLEEP, FLYING SINCE DAWN, AND MIDDAY HEAT, DUO PERFORMED WITH A VIGOR THAT ZAS RECIPROCATED IN AUDIENCE'S PARTICIPATION AND APPLAUSE. DUO'S APPEARANCE WILL BE FONDLY REMEMBERED FOR LONG TIME TO COME. AFTER CONCERT, AFRICAN LUNCH AT GOVERNOR'S HOUSE WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS GAVE DUO A WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO SOCIALIZE WITH CONGOLESE INFORMALLY.

5. ACCOMPANYING DUO THROUGHOUT COUNTRY WERE CHARGE KATZEN, ACTION DIRECTOR SAM BROWN, AND USIS OFFICER HULL. STATE AF/C DESK OFFICER KATES TRAVELLED ON POINTE-NOIRE LEG OF TOUR.

6. ARS MATERIAL FACILITATED PRE-CONCERT PUBLICITY THAT INCLUDED ARTICLE AND PHOTO IN BRAZZAVILLE NEWSPAPER MZETI, TV NEWS STORY, AND PLAYING OF DUO'S MUSIC ON NATIONAL RADIO. DURING TOUR, EMBASSY BULLETIN AND TOPIC WERE DISTRIBUTED AND VOA HAND-OUTS WERE GIVEN TO SIGNITARIES AND THOSE HELPING WITH CONCERTS.

7. ALTHOUGH PROGRAMMING 3 CONCERTS IN 3 DAYS IN 3 CORNERS OF CONGO WITHOUT ANY LOCAL EMPLOYEES OR USIS INFRASTRUCTURE EXCEPT 10 DAYS TDY BY KINSHASA PAT HULL, AND IN COUNTRY WHERE EVERYTHING NOW CLOSES AT 1300, THE BAKER/SANDERS TOUR ZENT WITHOUT A HITCH.
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THIS WAS MAKE POSSIBLE BY EXCELLENT COOPERATION FROM GOCB OFFICIALS, PARTICULARLY CULTURE MINISTRY.

8. BAKER AND SANDERS DESERVE PLAUDITS FOR ENDURING ARDUOUS SCHEDULE AT END OF LONG AFRICAN TOUR ZITH MINIMAL COMPLAINT. THEY ARE TRULY PROFESSIONAL PERFORMERS, AND THEIR APPEARANCE IN THE CONGO CONTRIBUTED IMMEASURABLY TO CONGOLESE APPRECIATION OF AMERICAN CULTURE AND TO THE RECENTLY RENEWED NORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES. DESPITE EXHAUSTION, WE BELIEVE DUO ENJOYED CONGO VISIT. SANDERS REMARKED IT WAS THE ONE STOP ON TOUR WHERE THEY WERE TRULY ABLE TO REACH OUT, BE WITH, AND UNDERSTAND THE PEOPLE. EMBASSY WELCOMED BAKER/SANDERS VISIT, AND WE THINK IAA AND ARS FOR HAVING MADE PROGRAM POSSIBLE. IT HELPED SIGNIFICANTLY IN FURTHERING US OBJECTIVE OF IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH CONGO. KATZEN

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